

Fact Sheet 3

Draft Solid Waste Facilities Master Plan

Recommended Option Identified for Solid Waste Facilities Master Plan

Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) has completed the Draft Solid Waste Facilities Master Plan. The plan identifies a recommended option for improvements to the city's solid waste facilities. These improvements include:

- Building a new solid waste intermodal transfer facility and
- Rebuilding the two existing city recycling and disposal stations.

The recycling and disposal stations are over 35 years old, are subject to frequent breakdowns, and are becoming less reliable as they age. In addition, the outdated designs are inefficient and lack the capacity to meet Seattle's future recycling and waste handling needs. SPU believes the recommended option will best improve service to customers, reduce environmental impacts, improve safety, and increase the efficiency of solid waste management in the city.

SPU narrowed an original list of over 20 options down to the recommended option using criteria that were consistent with the goals set by the City in Resolution 30341, which initiated the development of this plan. In addition, throughout the analysis, SPU received input from citizens, community and business organizations, facility staff, and other stakeholders. The recommended option addresses issues identified by stakeholders, such as reducing air and noise emissions, increasing reuse and recycling opportunities, and reducing traffic congestion at and near the stations.

In 2004, SPU will perform an environmental review of the plan in compliance with the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA).

The **purpose** of the Solid Waste Facilities Master Plan is to develop recommendations for facility improvements to the solid waste management system that will meet the city's needs for the long-term future.

Background

Built in the 1960s, the city's recycling and disposal stations are outdated. Changes and improvements are needed to accommodate customers, address traffic congestion and transportation challenges, reduce pollution and environmental impacts, accommodate future recycling and reuse programs, reduce neighborhood impacts, improve safety, and more.

The 1998 Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan identified the need for new and different facilities. In December 2001, the City Council passed a resolution (#30341) directing SPU to prepare a long-range solid waste facility plan. The resulting Solid Waste Facilities Master Plan defines system-wide needs over the next 30-plus years and identifies the best way to meet those needs.

North Recycling & Disposal Station. Built in the 1960s, the stations need frequent repairs and lack capacity to meet future customer demand.



The Recommended Option

The recommended option involves construction of a new intermodal solid waste transfer facility and rebuilding the two existing recycling and disposal stations in Wallingford and South Park. This option would increase flexibility to adapt to changes in the wastestream, regulations and technologies, and would improve system efficiency.

NEW INTERMODAL FACILITY

A new intermodal solid waste transfer facility would allow waste to be transferred directly from collection trucks into intermodal containers for transport to a disposal facility. An intermodal facility allows cargo to be loaded onto a variety of transport vehicles, such as trucks, trains, barges and ships. This provides the city flexibility to use the most cost-effective transport to a disposal facility. SPU is considering industrial areas south of downtown for the intermodal transfer facility.

Currently, collection trucks drop off waste at the two recycling and disposal stations and two private transfer stations, where it is compacted and loaded into intermodal containers. These containers are trucked to a rail yard for transport to a landfill. Under the recommended option, most waste collection trucks would be re-routed directly to the new intermodal facility, bypassing the existing stations entirely. Benefits of a new intermodal facility include:

- Increased transfer efficiency and less traffic congestion at the recycling and disposal stations.
- Reduced number of intermodal containers and shipping costs because more waste could be loaded into the containers at the intermodal facility since the containers would not be restricted by road weight limits.
- Access to more rail lines and landfills, resulting in greater flexibility and more competitive pricing.
- Long-term assurance of a suitable site to transfer waste by train or other modes of transportation if other modes become more economical.



Argo Railyard: city waste is trucked from various transfer stations to Argo Yard in intermodal containers and loaded onto a train for shipment to a distant landfill.

RECYCLING AND DISPOSAL STATIONS

The city-owned recycling and disposal stations would continue to accept self-haul waste, yard waste and recyclables. Both of these stations would be rebuilt to improve operations and expand recycling and reuse opportunities.

Customer service improvements:

- Less wait time with multiple lines, scales, and over twice as many unload stalls
- Separate recycling and reuse areas that will keep disposal and recycling traffic separate
- Separate unload areas for large trucks and private vehicles to improve safety and efficiency
- More waste diversion opportunities with improved recycling and reuse areas
- Better pollution controls to reduce dust, odors, noise, and other emissions
- Safer unload areas, better lighting, and other safety improvements
- Additional payment options to speed exit
- Viewing areas, classroom, and educational displays

Local environment improvements:

- Sustainability incorporated into building designs
 - Energy and water efficient
 - Low-maintenance design
 - Improved pollution controls
 - Use of recycled materials in construction
- Safer buildings with improved seismic stability, fire controls, and safety equipment
- Improved building design and controls to minimize air borne emissions and noise
- Less truck traffic in adjacent neighborhoods and shorter lines into the facilities
- Improved appearance and landscape design
- New station office, parking, and meeting rooms
- Art displays utilizing discarded materials, possibly funded through the 1% for Art Program

NORTH RECYCLING & DISPOSAL STATION (NDRS)

Improvements specific to the north station include rebuilding the main facility and extending it south to accommodate additional unload stalls and scales. Also recommended are: an area for reuse item drop-off, recycling area, an office, employee facilities, a classroom/meeting room, and parking for employees and visitors. These new facilities would add about 1 ½ acres to the existing site.

SOUTH RECYCLING & DISPOSAL STATION (SDRS)

Improvements specific to the south station include rebuilding a larger main facility, building a reuse retail store, a recycling building, a material recover facility for construction and demolition waste, an office, employee facilities, and an equipment shop. Approximately four acres of adjacent property would be purchased to accommodate these facility improvements.



With construction of a new intermodal station, most waste collection trucks would be re-routed directly to the intermodal facility, bypassing the recycling and disposal stations entirely.

HOW DOES THE RECOMMENDED OPTION COMPARE TO THE STATUS QUO?

	Status Quo	Recommended Option
Additional system cost over status quo (existing facilities)	\$0	About a 1.2% increase in annual costs of the solid waste system
Reuse facilities	None	Reuse drop-off at NRDS Reuse drop-off & reuse store at SRDS
Self-haul recycling	No significant change. Currently at 18% diversion of self-haul tonnage. May decline in future due to lack of space and old building design	Recycling drop-off areas separate from disposal areas at both stations. Separate material recovery facility at SRDS. Estimated diversion rate expected to increase to 37% of tons received.
Wait time on busy day	More than 2 hours	Less than 30 minutes. Typical wait less than 15 minutes.
Customer use areas	No significant change	Over twice as many unload stalls and multiple entry lanes to reduce wait time.
Health & safety	Meets basic health and safety standards, but many physical hazards remain	Improved safety with a reduction in physical and environmental hazards
Education opportunities	None	Viewing areas and class room
Employee facilities	Rebuild office and employee facilities within space available to meet codes	A larger office, employee break room, locker room and classroom
Local environment at stations	Occasional dust, odor and noise	Reduced dust, odor, noise and truck traffic
Facility appearance	No significant change	Improved building aesthetics and landscaping, plus 1% for art using discarded materials

Next Steps

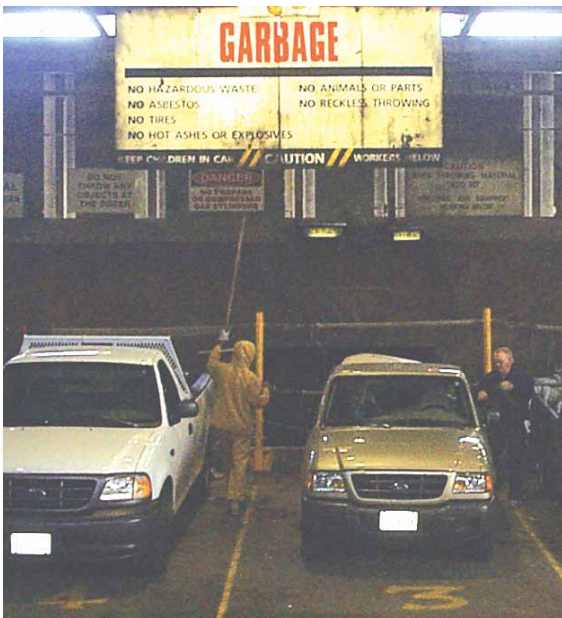
The City Council will review and comment on the draft plan this winter and the plan will be finalized shortly thereafter. An environmental review of the status quo and recommended option will be performed in 2004. This review will include a detailed look at the potential environmental impacts of recommended facility improvements and how those impacts may be addressed. During this process, the public will have an opportunity to review the draft plan and identify potential adverse impacts for evaluation. Public meetings will be advertised in city newspapers and announced on the SPU website.

For **additional information** about this project, visit the SPU website at <http://www.seattle.gov/util/solidwaste/swmasterplan.htm> or contact Henry Friedman at (206) 733-9147 or email swfmp.spu@seattle.gov.

Project Timeline

- **FEBRUARY 2003**
Identification of issues: public forums, community briefings and employee meetings
- **SPRING 2003**
Development of options
- **APRIL 2003**
Preliminary screening of options: public forums
- **SUMMER 2003**
Detailed evaluation of most feasible options
- **FALL 2003**
Completion of the Draft Solid Waste Facilities Master Plan
- **2004**
Environmental review process, conceptual designs, public input and permitting

Both city-owned recycling and disposal stations would continue to accept self-haul waste, yard waste and recyclables, and would be rebuilt to improve operations and expand recycling and reuse opportunities.



Rebuilding of the South Recycling and Disposal Station would provide more resource recovery opportunities, including a reuse retail store and a material recovery facility.